

IN THE CLAIMS

*The status of the claims as presently amended is as follows:*

1. *(Previously Presented)* A vibration wave driven apparatus comprising:

a driven member; and

a vibrator comprising:

an elastic member having one surface opposed to said driven member, and another surface, said elastic member having a plurality of spaced contact parts formed on the one surface and disposed in contact with said driven member, said elastic member being formed of a single member; and

an electromechanical conversion element joined to the another surface of said elastic member,

wherein said elastic member has at least one cutout that extends completely through said elastic member to expose part of said electromechanical conversion element at a location where the another surface of said elastic member is joined to said electromechanical conversion element,

wherein portions of said elastic member adjacent to said cutout form the spaced contact parts,

wherein said at least one cutout is opposed to said driven member, and

wherein said elastic member is disposed in contact with said driven member only at said spaced contact parts.

2. *(Previously Presented)* A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said elastic member has a second portion extending laterally away from said driven member, said second portion being flush with said spaced contact parts.

3. *(Previously Presented)* A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said elastic member is formed from a metal plate material.

4. *(Original)* A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said electromechanical conversion element comprises a laminated piezoelectric element having piezoelectric materials and electrode materials alternately laminated one upon another.

5. (*Previously Presented*) A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said elastic member includes a plurality of second cutouts at a plurality of locations thereof for adjusting vibration characteristics of the vibrator.

6. (*Original*) A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said elastic member has at least one supporting part integrally formed thereon, for supporting the vibrator.

7. (*Original*) A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said electromechanical conversion element excites said elastic member in a plurality of out-of-plane bending vibration modes having different wavelength directions.

8. (*Previously Presented*) A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said plurality of spaced contact parts are formed in a vicinity of loops of one of the bending vibration modes and in a vicinity of nodes of another one of the bending vibration modes.

9. (*Canceled*)

10. (*Original*) A vibration wave driven apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said driven member and said elastic member form a magnetic circuit.

11. (*Previously Presented*) A vibrator comprising:

an elastic member having one surface and another surface, said elastic member having a plurality of spaced contact parts formed on the one surface, said elastic member being formed of a single member; and

an electromechanical conversion element joined to the another surface of said elastic member,

wherein said electromechanical conversion element excites said elastic member in a plurality of out-of-plane bending vibration modes having different wavelength directions, and

wherein said elastic member has at least one cutout that extends completely through said elastic member to expose part of said electromechanical conversion element at a location where the another surface of said elastic member is joined to said electromechanical conversion element,

wherein portions of said elastic member adjacent to said cutout form the spaced contact parts,

wherein said at least one cutout is configured to be opposed to a driven member, and

wherein said elastic member is configured to be disposed in contact with the driven member only at said spaced contact parts.

12. (*Previously Presented*) A vibrator according to claim 11, wherein said elastic member is formed from a metal plate material.

13. (*Original*) A vibrator according to claim 11, wherein said electromechanical conversion element comprises a laminated piezoelectric element having piezoelectric materials and electrode materials alternately laminated one upon another.

14. (*Previously Presented*) A vibrator according to claim 11, wherein said elastic member includes a plurality of second cutouts at a plurality of locations thereof for adjusting vibration characteristics of the vibrator.

15. (*Original*) A vibrator according to claim 11, wherein said elastic member has at least one supporting part integrally formed thereon, for supporting the vibrator.

16. (*Previously Presented*) A vibrator according to claim 11, wherein said plurality of spaced contact parts are formed in a vicinity of loops of one of the bending vibration modes and in a vicinity of nodes of another one of the bending vibration modes.

17-20. (*Canceled*)